

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A fertile transplastomic leguminous plant characterized in that it comprises at least one expression cassette inserted into the plastome intergenic region located between the TrnV gene and the rps 12/7 operon.
2. (Original) The fertile transplastomic leguminous plant as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it is soybean.
3. (Canceled).
4. (Canceled).
5. (Currently amended) The fertile transplastomic leguminous plant as claimed in ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, characterized in that said expression cassette is inserted between the soybean plastome sequences corresponding to SEQ ID NO: 1 and SEQ ID NO: 2.
6. (Currently amended) The fertile transplastomic leguminous plant as claimed in ~~claim 3~~ claim 1, characterized in that said expression cassette comprises, functionally linked to one another, at least one promoter which is functional in plastids from plant cells, a sequence encoding a protein and a terminator which is functional in plastids from plant cells.
7. (Currently amended) A transformation vector suitable for leguminous plant plastid transformation, characterized in that it comprises at least two sequences homologous with a zone of the plastome of the leguminous plant to be transformed, said homologous sequences bordering at least one expression cassette, and wherein one of the two homologous sequences comprises the genes encoding 16S ribosomal RNA (16SrRNA) and the Valine transfer RNA (TrnV), and the other homologous sequence comprises the intergenic region located between the TrnV gene and the rps12/7 operon.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) The vector as claimed in ~~claim 10~~ claim 7, characterized in that the homologous sequence comprising the genes encoding the 16S ribosomal RNA (16SrRNA) and the Valine transfer RNA (TrnV) is represented by SEQ ID NO: 1, and in that the homologous sequence comprising the intergenic region located between the TrnV gene and the rps12/7 operon is represented by SEQ ID NO: 2.

12. (Previously presented) The vector as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the homologous sequence comprising the genes encoding the 16S ribosomal RNA (16SrRNA) and the Valine transfer RNA (TrnV) is positioned 5' of the expression cassette, and in that the homologous sequence comprising the intergenic region located between the TrnV gene and the rps12/7 operon is positioned 3' of the expression cassette.

13. (Previously presented) The vector as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that said homologous sequences border, in addition to an expression cassette comprising a sequence encoding a protein of interest, at least one other expression cassette comprising a sequence encoding a selection marker.

14. (Currently amended) A method for obtaining fertile transplastomic leguminous plants, characterized in that it comprises the steps of:

(a) transforming embryogenic tissues obtained from immature embryos of leguminous plants with a vector suitable for plastid transformation, wherein said vector suitable for plastid transformation comprises at least two sequences homologous with a zone of the plastome of the leguminous plant to be transformed, said homologous sequences bordering at least one expression cassette, and wherein one of the two homologous sequences comprises the genes encoding 16S ribosomal RNA (16SrRNA) and the Valine transfer RNA (TrnV), and the

other homologous sequence comprises the intergenic region located between the TrnV gene and the rps12/7 operon,

(b) selecting the transformed tissues, and

(c) regenerating fertile transplastomic plants from the transformed tissues.

15. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 14, characterized in that the method of transformation used is the “particle bombardment” method.

16. (Canceled)